TOWN & OUNTRY HURCH

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Worship Methods in the Rural Church

EDWARD KRUSEN ZIEGLER

• It is easy to allow all the peripheral activities of the church to usurp the central place which worship should have. Only the churches in which worship is central, vital, carefully planned, and real show evidence of spiritual vigor and social effectiveness.

Nothing else in all the world is so important. For in worship, the minister and his people will find vision to see the world, the people in it and their manifold problems, the church, the immediate and urgent perplexities and complexities through the eyes of the Eternal God. They will find serenity. They will find guidance. They will find power to live triumphantly in a defeated age, nobly when they are surrounded by meanness, creatively when others meet frustration and futility, lovingly when other men act from motives of selfishness and fear. Above all, they will find God.

The Church's Task

Worship—whether a man lives in the countryside or a city apartment—is communion, direct and life giving, with the Eternal God. It is clear, therefore, that the chief task of the church is to bring men and women and children into that direct, life-changing communion with God which is at the heart of religion.

Those who really worship find certain consequences flowing freely and unquenchably from the experience of worship. They find a new consciousness of God in all of life. All their work becomes partnership with a creating and sustaining God. He becomes the center, the norm of all being and doing.

The worshipper receives strength from the worshipping group. No stronger force for welding persons into true community can ever be found than common worship which is real and sincere. Even though the group be small, like the handful of ten or twelve devout souls in a little chapel in the Georgia hills or in a little compound in a remote Indian village, yet there is a sense of oneness with the great fellowship of the universal church.

Eternal Values

Effective worship results in powerful emotional reinforcement of ideals and attitudes. Through the experience of worship we find new power to win the victory over every form of evil and sin in ourselves and in our environment. We find release from anxiety, bad habits, fear, and those attitudes and traits which make us un-Christian in personal character and community and family relationships.

Worship makes for stability. It integrates us into true community groups, gives us insight into eternal values and promotes our commitment to them.

The Rural Church

The relevance of all this for the rural church is obvious and urgent. All over the world, rural life has been rapidly and progressively secularized. Wherever the family farm has given way to mechanized commercial agriculture, wherever agriculture is no longer a way of life, where greed and exploitation have displaced a reverent appreciation and conservation of the resources of the good earth, the church is challenged. Where the worship in the rural church is vital and true and where it is intimately linked with daily life, it will have a powerful effect upon these conditions.

If we would stem the tide of secularization, we who are in the rural church must find the way to put the consciousness of God into the stream of daily life and work. Wherever worship and daily life and work are divorced one from the other, worship becomes formal, cold and unreal, and work becomes secularized drudgery.

Wherever worship is the expression of the religious consciousness in relation to work, and work is

At the Columbia Convocation

The National Convocation on the Church Town and Country was held at Colum-, Missouri, November 7-9, 1950. Over five ndred persons registered and many more ended.

Those who attended the Convocation all tify to the effect that a cooperative spirit s evident throughout the entire session. ose who attended worked intensively e by side in commissions which are rted in this issue.

The Convocation is an informal assembly individuals, held under the auspices of e Department of Town and Country urch, Division of Home Missions, Na-nal Council of the Churches of Christ in e U.S.A.

The first session of the Convocation was ld in 1943 at Columbus, Ohio.

The Convocation invites those most con-rned with the rural church to come to-ther once a year. These persons worship gether, educate one another, and formu-te findings and recommendations.

Those attending the Convocation d those who address it speak for emselves and not for the Depart-ent of Town and Country Church the National Council of the hurches of Christ in the U.S.A.

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done in the light of the worker's communion with God, prayer becomes power, and work is sanctified, made glorious and infinitely rewarding.

Vital Preaching

Rural ministers are aware as never before of the place and power of good preaching in real worship. I honestly believe that there is as good preaching in many of our rural churches today as anywhere in the world.

Rural ministers recognize that the solid core of their Gospel is the same as that preached by their urban colleagues. Yet in the clothing of their messages with illustration, the application of the Gospel to daily life, they have a wealth of resources at hand and they will ever present their messages in the language which their people understand. They have indeed, in the parables and discourses of Jesus, the perfect example of the clothing of their message in rural figures and metaphors. They apply the Gospel, preaching stewardship of the earth, the basic tenets of the Kingdom in rural community life, the true foundations of rural salvation.

Pioneering

I would challenge you, my brethren in the ministry to rural people, to creative pioneering in bringing our people into the real presence of the Eternal God. We need to be experts in the art of leadership in worship. This is even more important for us than to be good rural sociologists, good educators, good organizers, great scholars, great farmers. Our major task is to bring people to God; our major opportunity for doing it is in worship.

I know of no higher ministry than this. We are prophets and priests of the Almighty in the finest sense. I ask no dream higher than this, no work more sublime, no task more rewarding, than that I may lead my flock of rural folk into the green pastures and by the still waters of God's presence. And the goodness and mercy of God shall follow them and me all the days of our lives, and we shall dwell in His House forever.

Convocation Registration

• Thirty-six of the forty-eight states were represented at the National Co vocation on the Church in Town and Country, held at Columbia, Mo., N vember 7-9, 1950. The map shown above and the tabulation below show tl distribution:

New England States	6	South Atlantic	
Middle Atlantic	31	East South Central	
East North Central	155	West South Central	
West North Central	240	Mountain	
Pacific States	3		

Who Follows Up the Convocation?

• The ideas and specific plans considered are implemented in numerous ways and channels. The persons who took part in the Columbia meeting are the first and foremost line of implementation. These men and women live in rural communities. They are pastors and lay people in local churches. They are administrators of numerous denominational and interdenominational agencies. They are teachers and writers, and students in colleges and seminaries.

The local and state councils of churches have special responsibilities for furthering the cooperative aspects of the Convocation's ideas and plans. There is an extensive follow-up through the religious press and news services. The daily press calls attention to Convocation highlights.

Nationally, a responsibility for follow-up rests upon the various rural church departments of the constituent denominations, and also their agencies of religious educatio The Department of Town an Country Church is the nation clearing house for interdenomin tional programs, and it has respo sibility for those aspects of the Co vocation's recommendations requi ing national collaboration amon the religious bodies.

Issues of TOWN AND COUNTR CHURCH are, we hope, influential i implementation.

Devotions at the Convocation

• Worship services of the Convoc tion were conducted by Ray I Magnuson, Methodist minister a Yuba City, California. At the wo ship services, use was made of th hymnal, *Hymns of the Rural Spiri* If your church is not using *Hymn of the Rural Spirit,* write to th Commission on Worship, Nationa Council of Churches of Christ i the U.S.A., 297 Fourth Avenue, Ne York 10, N. Y., sending 35c for single copy.

Protestant Contributions to Democracy Through Local Group Action

VICTOR OBENHAUS

Protestantism is not in itself a igion. It is rather a principle, an itude, a means, an instrument ilitating our search to discover d's purpose for man, and hence ate ourselves to that purpose in ys consistent with what we be- ve to be God's will.

This Town and Country Convo- tion arises from the fact that our veral attempts to cope with the ajor issues of rural life apart from ndamental principles may be in- equate. We who are committed the Protestant principle in re- gion—to democracy in all forms communal living—and to the cal group as a means of imple- enting both—are under the neces- ty of clarifying the importance nd inseparableness of all three.

emocracy

We are primarily concerned with emocracy and all that it implies. emocracy is that form of govern- ent or social life which gives the eatest assurance of both freedom nd justice to human beings. It can ome into being only by the freely iven consent of the governed. It ssumes the equal rights of all hu- an beings.

It is an incontrovertible fact that emocracy has never survived or ven prevailed where it was not un- ergirded by religion. And in the estern world, it has only existed n its finest form where undergirded y the Christian faith and specifical- y the Christian faith as interpreted n the Protestant principle. Democ- acy is but a means toward a yet nore noble end—the well-being of nankind.

Here then the issue is joined. De- nocracy is that form of human re- ationship most likely to provide the ircumstances needed by man for is fulfillment. Protestantism is the orm of religious expression we be- ieve most likely to facilitate the ullest discovery of our relationship o God and our fellowman. Protestantism as a religious principle and democracy as a political principle are inseparable.

Interpreters of both rural and urban life have had to reckon with the unescapable fact of industrialization and the concentration of people in American society. What we are compelled to deal with is the problem of the little man in a huge society.

Local Group Action

Industry is making heroic efforts to rediscover the genius of the small local group, in order that its well recognized values may be put at the service of the same industry which minimized the value of the small group originally. It is becoming increasingly apparent, however, that industry cannot appropriate to itself the values of the small group without at the same time accommodating itself to the inevitable democratizing which accompanies its recognition.

Religion as a social phenomenon has never existed apart from the local group—the local group which finds itself deeply concerned with common human problems.

Individual significance and personal importance were rooted in a depth of religious understanding concerning the nature of man himself. It had profound religious depth. Democracy has never thrived under an authoritarian religion.

From the days of the Methodist class meeting in Britain to the occasional study-and-action group in our local churches we have been slightly aware of the study group in the local church. The development of consumers' cooperatives and marketing associations and the credit unions through the study group have reminded many a church of the potency of this unit as a contributor to the life of church and community.

Can it not now be said with justification that the small group is no longer to be regarded as a curious phenomenon. Rather it contains the seedbed of any genuine religious democratic life.

Democracy is seen as inseparably related to the Protestant principle —it is not an end. It is a process—a process which results in action. But such action does not emerge from

Waterford, Vt.

Winston Pote
From A. Devaney, N. Y.

large bodies. It is only likely to be responsible where it has emerged from local groups conscious of the implications of their action.

The Stuff of Life

There is nothing greater the church can do for society than to be a center in which small groups of persons are together, entering into this experience of renewal and giving each other mutual support in Christian living and action in secular spheres. Such groups will find their vital inspiration in word and sacrament and in such gatherings as the parish meeting.

The task of multiplying opportunities of cooperation and of build-up small communities with common interests and shared responsibilities may often seem humdrum and commonplace. The strength to preserve comes from the knowledge that the relations of persons are the stuff of life.

Personhood

The Protestant principle and democracy are inseparable. There cannot be one without the other. But they do not automatically come into being. They are instruments to the larger goal of man's salvation—the salvation of the person. But a person only becomes a person in companionship with other persons. Thus the conditions going into and conditioning personhood are of fundamental religious significance.

Through the centuries no more effective means of building a society conducive to the finest flowering of personhood has been developed than the small local group. The range of its concerns is as great as that of human experience itself. Through it there is the greatest likelihood of responsible participation in society being achieved. Here is the best known vehicle of the transformation of individuals and society.

In the fellowship and actions of the small local group Protestantism and democracy become the instruments of man's service to the glory of God.

Today we know enough of the debilitation resulting from mass movements to know that an alternative is desperately needed. Salvation for groups as well as for individuals is not vicarious. In the words of the southern spiritual we must "walk the valley by ourselves. No one else can walk it for us."

This Is How We Did It

CECIL LEEK

• The Hamersville District of Congregational Christian Churches is located in the southwestern section of the state of Ohio. It is a group of some twenty-six churches, most of them established in the early part of the nineteenth century. During this period it seemed necessary to establish these churches close together, since transportation was by foot or horse and buggy, and this section was strictly rural.

With the turn of the twentieth century came the migration of the farm folk cityward, which caused a falling away of interest and the loss of membership to the rural church. Then came the first World War, and then the depression in the early thirties when many of the little one-room rural churches were about to go out of existence.

Interchurch Council

In 1948 a few of the churches that were still trying to carry on were called together to discuss what could be done to help them render a more helpful service to the neglected areas. Out of this meeting an interchurch council was organized, with each church represented officially by three delegates. The interest grew, and the council meetings soon became public meetings as the people became more interested in the church and what it was attempting to do. Organization activities were started.

Many of these churches are small, they were never organized for a full-time ministry. They will have to carry on mainly under lay leadership. Let me give you a more concrete example:

The Old Five Mile Church had been closed for more than fifteen years due to many of the people leaving the farm for the city. In the fall of 1949 a letter came from person living in the community as ing permission to rent or buy th old church in view of starting r ligious services in the communit It was agreed by our local counc that if a church was needed in th community, the Congregation Christian Churches should start i being owners of the property.

Soon thereafter a survey was mad in the Five Mile Community to d termine the interest and need. W found within a radius of one mil of the church forty-seven familie

Renovation

Well, we had some interestin times. In January of 1950 a hous cleaning was planned and twent four people from the communit and neighboring churches came ou to help. Fifteen years of accumulate dust and dirt is no easy task to r move.

The building was repaired fro belfry to foundation, painted an electricity installed. A membershi day was set and a program of i struction instituted.

At the present time there are onl two full-time ministers in the di trict, and I am the only active o dained minister in the district. W have five licensed men and severa lay workers all striving to build better rural church.

We believe in cooperation wit other denominations and in bring ing the neighborhood groups to gether in wider fellowship, thus pre paring them to labor together an to know each other beyond thei boundaries.

If we ever build a new rura church we will build it out of th materials in the old church, and w will use the old church until th new one is built.

The 1951 Convocation

• The 1951 National Convocatio on the Church in Town and Cou try will be held at Portland, Oregon October 30-November 1. From tim to time announcements will b made in this journal concernin the plans and program.

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The World Food Situation

RAYMOND W. MILLER

• Most of the economic unrest in the underdeveloped areas of the world, where over seventy-five per cent of the population is rural, is caused because too little land is available for too many people. In most cases this involves inflexible hereditary vestments of title, the effects of which are intensified by infeasible or outmoded systems of land tenure.

Small holdings and archaic marketing and purchasing methods combine in most areas to make the lot of the primary producers one of almost predestined poverty. In all areas where they have been seriously tested, voluntarily organized cooperatives have proven that they can serve as pace setters toward a better rural life if honestly and efficiently operated in the public interest.

Another impediment in the road to progress is the lack of means of transportation and communication in much of the world, even between places a few miles or kilometers apart. As far as the primary producer in these areas is concerned, the facilities have improved relatively little since the days of Abraham, of Confucius, or of Julius Caesar.

"Show-How" Needed

Most of the people of the world today are undernourished, poorly housed and inadequately clothed because the known methods of conservation of natural resources and of increasing, distributing and utilizing products from farms, forests, seas and mines have not been made available. This could be rapidly remedied through use of the techniques of extension wherein "know-how," can be taken from where it is to where it is needed, and made useful and understandable through "show-how."

Traditional but faulty nutritional practices combined with poorly designed or incorrectly used food-processing equipment results in the loss of a large percentage of the natural values of food as it is produced on the earth or in the sea. Food is of little value if it is not made available to the digestive system in such a way that it can sustain normal physical life. Antiquated methods of storing or preserving primary food, housing, and clothing materials result in large-scale waste.

"Balancing Agriculture with Industry" on a local basis in the interest of both rural and urban welfare is the key that will open the doors of political peace in much of the world. There is an almost universal abundance of available labor, raw materials and power resources which can be combined with known construction and manufacturing methods and chemurgic techniques to fill man's need for goods and services and his desire for the good things of life.

The "Top Soil" of Man

When it is possible for a producer by hard work to enjoy a reasonable living he is a solid citizen; when he is compelled to work without the opportunity to own even a home, a field or a cow (or a boat if he is a fisherman), through frustration he becomes a radical.

The greatest task of the twentieth century is to conserve and utilize the "top soil" of man—his brain—and bring it into beneficial production rather than allow it to erode through misuse or lie fallow through nonuse. This is not too baffling or difficult if attacked in a sympathetic and understanding manner with no precemented ideas as to racial superiority or national prestige. It should be recognized that men attain their highest plane when given the opportunity to work voluntarily with other and an incentive in the form of a reasonable reward for their efforts.

F. A. O.

The solution of these and related difficulties of mankind is the attainable goal of the Food and Agricul-

ture Organization of the United Nations and its member governments as they work with primary producers of the world: the farmers, the fishermen, the foresters, the villagers—in short, the great majority of mankind, in order that they may have sufficient food, shelter and clothing for themselves and a surplus which can be used as the basis for expanding national and world economy.

This Is How We Did It

CLYDE C. LEEDS

• On a bleak Saturday night in December of 1941 my wife and I first visited Garden City, Minnesota. It appeared to be a beautiful little village with a population of 350 people, and it had a main street that was at least a mile long. On this street were three taverns, three oil stations, a garage, two grocery stores, a post office, a hardware store, and two churches.

We turned our car lights on the church that was to be our church home for eight and one-half years. The picture was disappointing. In bold relief there stood a little brown church; it needed paint; the sidewalks around it were cracked and broken.

The church agreed to pay us a salary of $1,200 per year and to supply a parsonage. They had been paying $900. $300 per year was a tremendous increase for them. But how could I pay my bills and keep my family on $1,200 a year?

Stewardship

Something had to be done. We called together the elders of the church and, together, we evolved a plan of stewardship for our church which included the basic ideas of the Lord's Acre Movement which we chose to call the God's Portion Program. The program followed the New Testament teaching of stewardship; it followed the Old Testament tradition of bringing the first fruits. In this program, it was possible for everyone to have a part: the housewife with her chickens; the school boy with his paper route; the farmer with his produce; the laboring man with his labor.

The Yearbook for the Disciples of Christ for 1949 shows the following figures: A local budget of $5,694.70 and a missionary budget of $3,800.20 or a per capita missionary gift of $23.60 on a membership of 161 people.

To me, these are not just figures. They represent a little brown church that became a white church with a steeple pointing toward God and the sky. These figures mean a new roof, new floors, new furnace, new sidewalks, an addition to the educational plant, an improved parsonage. These figures mean more than just the acquisition of things and the improvement of property, important as they are. They mean a church that has served people through missions, through interdenominational agencies, through our Brotherhood of Disciples.

These figures represent money that was made available for taking care of little children. They represent a church that became willing to offer a program of service to its own community through 4-H Clubs, Scouting, and other agencies. These figures mean, to me, a church that upheld the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Rural Church and the Family Farm

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• The Commission on The Rural Church and the Family Farm considered three major questions relative to this subject. The first one was, "What is meant by the Family Farm?"

Contributions to this discussion were consistent with the statements given in the leaflet, *The Church and the Family Farm.* Special considerations were given to the passing of the farm from father to son; recognizing world citizenship responsibilities of all farm families; the inadequacy of the "agricultural ladder"; emphasizing the factor of family attitudes and relationships; and understanding trends affecting family farms.

The second question which we discussed was, "Why are we interested in the family-type farm?" Opinions were varied and included the following propositions: The church program varies with the kind of people who live in the community; instability of population weakens community institutions; support of churches is more certain in family farm areas; family farms provide a training ground for teaching Christian principles; individual personalities are given more opportunities for development; family life is more likely to be unified and developed; attitudes towards stewardship are involved which are religious in nature; integration of family life in society is more adequate; it provides a sound basis for integration of life by considering the making of a living and the rearing of children.

The last session of the commission was devoted to a discussion of what the churches can do. It was felt that the work of the churches should build a consciousness of stewardship, keep in step with needed reorganization of farm programs, should support programs for modernizing farm homes and provide social and cultural advantages in rural communities. The churches should support public policies which favor family farms and join forces with other resources in conducting Church and Family Farm Institutes.

—JOSEPH ACKERMAN, *Chairman*

The Commissions of the Convocation

• Each of the eighteen commissions of the Convocation consisted of an interested group of people who met for the purpose of formulating recommendations as to future program emphases for the rural church—national, state and local, especially local.

The digests of the commission reports, as published in this issue were taken from summaries furnished by chairmen or secretaries of commissions or both, or persons named by them. The names appearing after the commission reports are those who, we understand, were mainly responsible for either the commission program or for the report further to us.

Some Rural Situations and the Responsibilities of Rural Churches

CARL C. TAYLOR

Present situations are the end-roducts of long time trends. Today am naming five of these trends and educing their end product to one tuation which is so all pervasive as literally constitute the one great oral problem of American society.

The five major trends I am nam-ng are: (1) The slow-down, and in great many cases, failure, of the gricultural ladder to work as it did uring the 250 years of our rapid evelopment; (2) The fluidity of the ccupation of farming—almost one-hird of our farm operators now do ome off-farm work; (3) The loss of ural folk life in the process of pro-lucing for market sale; (4) The teady rise in both levels and stand-rds of living; (5) Our changing nethods of obtaining security.

Secularization

The one basic trend which is a omponent of all these, and others, s the consistent trend toward secu-arization of what we do and think. We even buy our security from giant ife insurance companies, re-buy our arms each generation, barter away ur folk values for money values, and measure our standards of living by the gadgets we can buy. This trend reaches back over many cen-turies and because of that fact and the fact that it consists of so many things we call progress it will not be easy to change its direction.

The most significant meaning of secularism is that it is not under-written with a set of moral impera-tives such as prevailed in simpler societies. In primitive, so-called sacred societies the individual's life was so simple and group life so co-hesive that its group imperatives were reflected directly in the con-science of each member of the group. Because of the complexity and the secularity of their relation-ships, men today are parts of groups about which they have no conscious-ness, and naturally therefore no con-science.

Moral Imperatives

Simple societies had moral im-peratives for the resolution of all problems upon which the survival and integrity of their groups de-pended. The Iroquois Indians de-pended heavily on fish as part of their food supply. They guarded this natural resource by a taboo against fishing during the spawning season. The individual Iroquois believed that if he violated this taboo, Orenda, the Great Spirit of Wa-cunda, would strike him dead or bring some dire thing into his life.

We call such things superstition, and so they are, but a conscience on the part of individuals is essential to maintaining the group's moral im-peratives. Taboos and sanctions were supposed to identify those objects and those types of behavior which were good or bad. The most univer-sal ones had to do with the con-servation of the natural resources upon which the physical survival of groups depended. Others sought to perpetuate the integrity, or whole-ness, of the individual group. Their methods of enforcing their moral imperatives were cruel but they nev-ertheless converted their beliefs into religious doctrines and their prac-tices into religious rites the better and surer to preserve them.

By discovering on what basic is-sues of life people over long periods of time have developed their moral imperatives, and by learning how deeply they have been convinced that both group survival and group integrity depended on the mainte-nance of these moral imperatives, we will see more clearly our own situa-tions and responsibilities.

Evolution

We are not going to turn back the direction evolution has traveled from the ways of primitive societies to the ways of our secular society. But it is my belief that some guide posts for underwriting our secular behavior with moral imperatives can be visioned by finding answers to the question of how the sure moral imperatives, which at one time ex-isted, were diluted during that evo-lution.

I believe the first step in that di-lution came when social contacts were extended beyond the bounda-ries of face-to-face groups and thus included strangers. A stranger was not a real person because he was not a member of one's own group. The second step was the development of money economy, ultimately applied to nautral resources as well as trade. When land was alienated from group ownership and became an individu-ally merchantable good, the value of land was no longer measured by group survival values but by money values. The third step was the de-velopment of specialization, i.e., the individualization of personal func-tioning, in which the value of each person was measured in terms of his individual talents and not in terms of good group membership. All these were steps in the long evolution of the secularization of human rela-tions and the consequent dilution of the individual's group responsibility.

Some results can be seen in our own short history. We have depleted a lot of the natural resources upon which the survival of future genera-tions depends, because we came to believe that resources belonged to individuals. We have so atomized our economic and even social func-tioning by specialization that neither our practices nor our intelligences have all the attributes of whole per-sonalities. Our complex economic life, necessarily operated by money and market techniques and tech-nologies, has become so impersonal that we don't recognize it as a po-tentially wonderful system of mutual aid. Nine-tenths of the persons with whom we are inextricably related are strangers to us.

Group Consciousness

The development of moral senti-ment is not automatic in such a complex and impersonal society. Primitive groups knew the limits of their natural resources and that they must conserve them or die. Every

(*Continued on Page* 16)

The Church and Farm Policy

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• The Commission, The Church and Farm Policy, conducted its discussions on Farm Policy at three levels: international, national, and local. The Commission owes a great deal to Dr. Carl Taylor, Dr. Raymond Miller, and Dr. MacNamara of the Agricultural College of the University of Missouri, who made valuable contributions to our discussions.

Dr. Taylor opened our discussions with some comments on the national farm policies. It was suggested that one thing every minister could do would be to determine, in consultation with farm agency representatives, where the limits of efficient farming can be set.

In our second session we considered our international policy, and had as a resource the valuable contributions of Dr. Miller. The general principle of the President's Point Four Program was presented by Dr. MacNamara.

The final session was devoted to a consideration of the Agricultural Policy Statement No. 2, "Natural Resources, Development and Conservation," of the Agricultural Relations Department, Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches.

The debated issues seemed to be two: the autocratic decisions as to places, property values, and movement of families in under-water areas; and the rights of states to carry out programs within their own borders.

The Commission closed with the consideration of a question which was close to the heart of the matter:

Where is the place of the church in foreign and domestic policy? Can we officially, as ministers and churches, endorse one plan or another? Or is our function to gather and present information upon which those in the churches can make their own decisions? Several things were pointed out:

1. It will vary with the concept of the church.
2. Does the church lead the way, or sanction certain patterns?
3. "Division of labor" can be practiced in social organizations with the church working in areas not already covered.
4. We can speak our convictions when they are based on value patterns of social group history, on information and not prejudice.
5. Forums, discussions, use of prayer meeting and adult class time should be utilized.

It was felt that the church has two responsibilities in farm policy:

1. To make information about it available.
2. To assist in its formation on Christian bases by making it possible for more people to arrive at honest convictions about farm policies.

—THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP, *Chairman*

ORVAL W. SAMPSON, *Secretary*

Religious Education

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• During the first session the group discussed the need for right motivation in recruiting new leadership. It was felt that there should be a definite plan for training leaders. Leadership courses, church libraries with helpful books for leaders, and laboratory schools were methods of training discussed by the group.

A major portion of the second period was spent in discussion of education of parents.

The entire commission was based on the concept of Christian education within the family and for the family. In this respect there continues to be need for development of materials for use in the home. Parents are teachers of religious education, whether they realize it or not. Most important in this whole process of education is the spiritual strength of the family.

—W. CLARK ELLZEY, *Chairman*

RUBY FORBIS, *Secretary*

GLENN S. GOTHARD, *Secretary*

The Rural Church and Minorit Peoples

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• The church, as a social institu tion, is a conserver of social values It serves also as an inspiration t those who are obligated to mak progress a reality. The price of prog ress is paid by persons, and the gain thus made are conserved by institu tions.

The members of this commissio deplore the dual system of educa tion which is a waste of economi human resources. This type of edu cation reduces the potential contri bution of minority members to sc ciety and increases the disorganiza tion of the community through ag gressions which arise from both groups.

The solution, which is basically change in attitudes of people, lie not in educational programs, but i projects which bring majority an minority members into face-to-fac relations. The church should pr mote opportunities for such contact

The members of this commissio recommend that a larger use b made of interracial forums on m nority problems at the local churc level, with a view toward elimina tion of the necessity for separatio of religious bodies on denomina tional and racial lines.

We recommend the organizatio of interracial and interdenomina tional ministerial alliances for th purpose of studying those problem which arise from minority and ma jority group relationships.

This procedure is recommende with a view towards creating an a mosphere in which cooperative work camps, youth assemblies, an other such projects may be orga ized on an interracial level as a basi for decreasing the necessity for socia stratifications within minority group and the rampant exploitation of m norities by the majorities, and thu dissipating energy which might b used as a constructive Christia force in our society.

—CHARLES F. GOLDEN, *Chairma*

ROE B. LEWIS, *Secretary*

NANCY J. NICHOLS, *Secretary*

GENE W. CARTER, *Coordinato*

This Is How We Did It

ELIZABETH THOMPSON

• Down in Louisiana where I live and work there are still churches that are linked together to form a charge where little effort has been made to create a sense of unity. Such conditions are being remedied in a number of ways and I want to tell you how we did it at Walker.

The Walker charge is composed of three churches with a membership of about three hundred and fifty. Two churches are in the open country, and one is in the village where the parsonage is located. It is in a nonfarm area. Only the smallest church had a woman's organization, and the other women had to be sold on the idea.

Our first meeting was charge-wide. Pictures of the Woman's Division at work around the world were shown to the entire congregation. On following nights we discussed the society as a means of enriching the individual and as a means by which the local woman could reach beyond her own community and help build a world Christian community. Neither at the meetings nor in personal visits did the minister or I ask the women to commit themselves about the organization. Some ideas were planted, but I wanted to be very sure it was their desire. I left, to return a week later for their answer.

Organization

The next week, fifteen women met at the parsonage and asked to be organized. Specific help and the necessary materials were given them. Shortly after our annual conference time arrived and a new minister was appointed. He has conserved all the beginnings and is wisely enlarging the program.

Actually they have only begun, but here are some of the results and plans for the immediate future: Parsonage improvement; beautification of church grounds; study courses, fostering of rural-urban relationships; and fellowship.

The women have two meetings monthly. The fifteen charter members have grown to twenty-seven. As I listen to them discuss plans for the future, they do not talk in terms of their local church but in terms of the entire area. These women believe that the best contribution they can make toward a world Christian community is to make their own community truly Christian.

Religious News Service Photo

The Minister and the Productive Homestead

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• Although the productive homestead is not a solution to every rural church problem, those attending this commission believe that it enables a minister to have a more satisfactory home and family life and to identify himself with the life of the people whom he serves. In many cases, it enables a minister to own his own home, and is conducive to a long-term pastorate in the community.

The opportunities for food production help to supplement the minister's salary, and thus gives him a sense of economic security.

This commission recommends that the Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches appoint a subcommittee on The Productive Homestead.

—RUSSELL HOY, *Chairman*

How Can We Make a Rural Church and Community Study?

DON F. PIELSTICK

• The basic convictions of the Christian church justify the classification of its work as the greatest in the world. What responsibility could be greater than that of "saving" a people from the jaws of "destruction"? Or of replacing "death" with "eternal life"? Or of showing "the way of life" to those who are "lost"?

Our concern here is to make suggestions as to means of appraising the effectiveness of our efforts in this great responsibility. Is my church or your church (as a social institution) behaving itself as though its ministry in the community were a matter of life and death? Do we know what has been accomplished? What tasks are yet undone? What areas of life are unreached by the Gospel? What resources are at our disposal? What other institutions can be considered our allies and what may we rightly expect of each?

Types of Studies

There are two common types of studies which might be made. Both are within the realm of possibility for most rural churches. The first may be called an objective study. As much as possible, those making the study should detach themselves from all sentimental connections with the church. They stand outside the church and by scientific procedures measure it. What is its size? Is the size adequate for the program? Is the financial support adequate and sound? Does its ministry fulfill its objectives?

The difficulty with such a study is that its main value may be as a resource volume in a research library. This is badly needed but it is not the kind of a study you are most likely to be interested in. You are probably more interested in a study which will make a local church sparkle with vitality. Such a study must be just as scientifically correct in method, just as thorough and just as free of uncritical sentimentalism as a purely objective study, but it must be made by the lay leaders of the church. I am not so naive as to assume that the average lay leaders are capable of supervising such a study. That will continue to be the responsibility of a specialist. But lay leaders are capable of carrying forward most of the routine examinations.

This is what I believe you want to happen when a study is made of your church and community. How then shall we proceed?

Preparation

Make up your mind that as the leader of the congregation you must accept the central responsibility. Before and during the study, make it the central emphasis of the Kingdom's business. In your planning and meditations try to formulate questions about your church and community which, if answered, would help to establish a direction for the Christian ministry. Write these questions out in detail and keep them in a special file. Make these questions a matter of information through sermon and discussion groups.

Establish contact with a reliable social scientist who will act as director of the study and who will perform tasks calling for technical competence.

Make up your mind that you are not going to do it all yourself. Your desire is to lead your congregation to a new birth.

If you have caught the significance of these items of preparation, you realize that the study is to be grounded in the Christian sense of responsibility and the Christian desire to awaken, for service, latent abilities.

Allies in the Study

One of the greatest benefits of the type of study I am describing is that the church discovers its allied relationships in the community. That is, it is awakened to the fact that most information considered important by other social institutions is also important to it.

Make a composite map of the extent of the rural mail route from the center of the community, the area of banking service, the public library, the high school district or pupil enrollment area, the distributors (fuel and oil, farm machinery, auto sales and service, etc.) and collectors (grain elevators, poultry and dairy products).

What sources of information should be looked into? It is impossible to list them all, but county units of federal programs, farmers' organizations, health associations, law enforcement agencies, and the County Superintendent of Schools can provide much help. For general background on the characteristics of the society, its population and general trends, consult the United States Census.

Studying the Church

We should not be satisfied simply to see our church in its social setting, however helpful and challenging this may be. We must study each church as a social institution. This you cannot do adequately or correctly unless you also study its relation to the other churches of the community. The essential facts to know about the churches are the life line in members, the life line in church school and youth program enrollments, the life line in finances, participation and age group analyses, the program, building, and equipment. These are basic.

Interpretation

If the work which such a survey will take is not to be lost, it must be written up. Experience has taught that it takes as much time to tabulate and write up a survey as it does to gather the data. Failure to do so is one of the most common errors. It often explains inadequate use and interpretation.

All program planning should be done in light of facts revealed in the study. This will require knowledge of the data by the program planning group and knowledge of

he implications of the data by hose who are expected to support he program.

The Church in Rural Mining Communities

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

The coal mining industry touches wenty-five of the United States, in- luding approximately a million nd one-half people who are rela- ively permanently settled in the mmediate area of the coal mining peration.

The church is ministering in hese areas on a part-time factional lenominational basis. The continu- ng leadership by a non-resident un- rained pastor has resulted in an in- adequate program and a lessening of the church's influence in com- munity life. Often the trained but non-resident ministry represents the support of denominational missions.

A comprehensive community-wide church program that seeks to serve people of all races is the only church that justifies its existence in a rural mining community.

Religious education is primary in such a program, and must be ex- panded to include the productive home, health and recreation.

Cooperation of existing agencies is imperative. The soliciting of aid from county, state and federal agen- cies not now serving in the commu- nity is a means of supplementing this program.

Such a program cannot be con- ceived, initiated, and maintained by a non-resident untrained minister.

The framework for such a ministry must be a community-wide church. The denominational community church, with a membership reach- ing across denominational lines and to all people in all classes—both la- bor and management—is suggested. The church must be free and not controlled by either management or labor. Company-owned churches must either be deeded to a respon- sible church group or some realistic understanding with management must be reached.

—WARD HIBBS, *Chairman*
H. S. BENSON, *Secretary*

The Educational Processes of Cooperatives in Relation to Rural Life

CARL R. HUTCHINSON

• The doctrines of love and mutual concern apply particularly well to cooperatives. And without the Christian doctrine of love, cooperation will fail.

Our economy today faces the problem of distribution—and co- operatives achieve the widest distri- bution of goods produced. Further- more, cooperatives produce the goods most needed. Labor's problem today is that of trying to make wages buy the goods needed. Cooperatives can keep the cost of goods down, and unions can raise wages, enabling the working man to raise his stand- ard of living.

Sociologists say that cooperatives broaden the horizon of the person who participates in them, because each new activity brings up new problems to be solved. Wherever co- operatives have been established, there you will find alert citizens.

Progressive educators believe that cooperatives are beneficial. Clergy- men are also interested in cooperatives in so far as they help stimulate the social and economic life of the people and their capacity to work together.

Small Groups

Communism has a good idea in using the small group technique. We should meet this challenge by organizing Christian fellowship groups on a democratic basis.

Social action among the farmers in the cooperative movement begins with their getting together and be- ginning to think and develop some purpose and objectives, and then asking themselves how to get this program into action. This happens when enough people have courage and faith in democracy, and enough training and discipline to know where the channels of action lie, and to work democratically with their neighbors.

These discussion groups are not just isolated groups but are coordi- nated with others in the country on a program of action. The county program reflects the thinking of the representatives of these groups, who in turn take back the decisions to their groups. Authority, responsibil- ity and action go back to the local groups. Furthermore, the groups meet in the homes of their members. These people stimulate themselves to action, and this is the key to democratic social action.

Cooperatives provide a technique for practicing the Christian ethic of love. They have revived the social structure and purpose through which teachers, church leaders and sociologists can work.

Religious leaders dealing with peoples' ideals and human values are dealing with the most dynamic and precious thing in human lives. This is a challenge to our faith. If we will think of people as total per- sons with total needs, we will be able to build and fortify the morale of Christian democracy.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administra- tion of the local church, this to in- clude organization of the church, finance, religious education, com- munity relationships, and the train- ing of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encour- age a national "rural church move- ment."

Task of the Town Church

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• This commission confined itself to a discussion of the town church and its area of responsibility except insofar as some attention was given to a consideration of the interrelations of city and county churches.

There has often been a separation of town life and rural or farm life, and this separation of life has carried through into the church life. Often the town church was strong in numbers, finances, leadership, ministry, physical plant and other ways. The smaller churches were left to struggle on alone.

Interaction

More recently a change has come upon the town church for it has begun to think of the larger community of which it is a part. The rural church has also begun to understand that it is closely related to other churches. Consequently, the trend is one in which each church thinks of itself as a part of a religious unit. The town and rural areas are interrelated and interdependent. There is constant interaction on all levels between those who live in the town and those living on the farm and in rural areas.

Church leadership has all to often tended to be collected in the town church at the expense of the surrounding neighborhood churches. Only as the town church can cooperate and work with other churches can there be a sharing of this leadership.

It is considered essential that the town church recognize the limits of the natural area of which it is a part in this cooperative effort. Otherwise there is danger that groups will be neglected. It is equally essential that all churches within the area work together cooperatively for their mutual advantage and the building of the Kingdom of God. The town church is often in a position where it should assume leadership and cooperative responsibility along with other churches for building the Kingdom of God in the countryside.

The town church, especially if it is considerably stronger financially and in membership, is in a delicate situation. How to cooperate without directing is no easy matter.

Throughout Protestantism, experiments have been carried on in an endeavor to discover the most effective method of making a cooperative approach. For many years the larger parish idea has been used. More recently the move in the direction of a voluntary cooperation between churches on both the denominational and interdenominational levels has received greatest attention. Some such plans have been designated the group ministry, pastoral unity, rural church clinic, community circuit, etc. These methods are commended and their contribution to the achievement of an effective method is recognized.

—GLENN F. SANFORD, *Chairman*

Study of the Rural Church Situation in Three Mid-West Counties

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• A summary of the findings of a survey of three Missouri counties was presented by the chairman and interpreted from the point of procedure to be used in studying other counties.

The commission first explored material that is available in the census reports, and considered how population pyramids can be constructed for a county as well as for a church or a parish. Suggestions were then presented for surveying churches and resources within a county in terms of number, size and distribution of churches; their financial budgets; the amount and type of ministerial service; and the life cycle of rural churches.

In addition to the usual items considered to be important in surveying a parish or county—changes in population, social trends, size of church membership, stratification levels, mechanization of agriculture—the commission was concerned about the potential contribution that might be made to town and country churches by studying the life cycle of rural churches in different regions of the United States.

—LAWRENCE M. HEPPLE, *Chairman*

Lay Participation in the Rural Church

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• Lay participation was defined in terms of the unpaid worker who helps to promote the activities and program of the church. In this commission there was divided opinion as to whether or not there is a decline in church lay participation.

In discussing ways of motivating people to take part in church activities, it was brought out that training in short courses, evangelism, accounts of what other churches are doing, and materials to work with—such as visual aids—are all helpful. To search out the interests and talents of each member of the church is the best way of finding a job that each can do. New people and youth should have special consideration.

The commission members grappled with the implication of Carl Taylor's address that religion and morals cannot be separated if the welfare of society is to be safeguarded. The Commission agreed that by tackling some of the moral issues now current much support could be developed if it were properly handled. It was felt that each local problem presents a unique situation, and it should be carefully studied to determine what the situation is, what its implications for social welfare may be, and what the church can do about it.

—C. E. LIVELY, *Chairman*
CARL A. BAUGHMAN, *Secretary*

How Did the Convocation Start?

• The Convocation was begun in 1943 because of the conviction of the Committee on Town and Country that there should be a regularly held gathering. National conferences had been held before under church auspices, in 1916 and in 1936. It was felt that there must be a continuous process. The decision to inaugurate the Convocation, and the paper TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH, was considerably hastened by expressions of opinion as to their need on the part of prominent laymen in the churches.

The Town and Country Church and This Convocation

CLAUDE J. SNYDER

This Convocation, held annually, making important contributions the rural life movement in our untry. Other agencies, some inrmal and voluntary, some deleated and well organized, are also uite significant in advancing the elfare of the people and institutons of the American countryside.

In our Convocations, pastors and ymen of the Protestant Church onfer for the purpose of increasg the effectiveness of the church the rural community. Since it is ot a delegated body, its findings re not in the form of resolutions r a program which the local church obligated to put into effect. Rathr, the results and gains of the Conocation follow from three opporunities in which we all may share: articipating in fellowship; acquirng information; and gaining inspirtion.

hurch's Responsibility

Our Convocation this year will ive added emphasis to the obligaion of the local church to its comnunity. Let me point out several articulars of this responsibility of he church:

Today, as never before, the local hurch must contribute to the delopment of a sense of community. ts teaching has ever shown some oncern in the economic and social ituation of its people. The vitality f the community results from the vorth of the varied organizations, he clarity of their aims and intended contributions, and the spirit of ooperative endeavor by the several rganizations toward a satisfying nd inclusive life.

The test of the church's own perception of the meaning of Christian ervice comes in its aloofness or its willingness to work with the other gencies and organizations for the nrichment of its own community. There is little sense in talking and preaching about a world brotherhood which does not have some practice in the laboratory of our own town or countryside.

The people composing the community can be its greatest asset. The personal quality of the population, the culture which they mutually develop and their mutual interest in each other's welfare are in large measure the determinants of the worth of this human factor of the locality. The individual sense of obligation to contribute to the general welfare of his community is the most essential particular in shaping the future possible enrichment of the group.

Community spirit can be cultivated by the opportunities of participation in activities, giving a sense of achievement to individuals and groups.

Individual's Responsibility

Every family resident in a community is the recipient of the values of the community—its neighborliness, its institutional life, and its organizational activities. If the family moves after one generation has gained the benefits of the community, the land or the business should not be sold without regard to the family obligation to the general welfare. As it has benefited by the intangible assets of the community, so should it be obligated to conserve them when the holding is sold to a new family. In brief, the church today must teach the individual's responsibility for the often unrecognized assets in his community.

The local church is truly a servant of the community. These days of new pioneering are bringing new opportunities and new responsibilities.

Extra Copies

• If you want extra copies of this report, remit at 15 cents each. We are printing a small supply. Send your check to Town and Country Church, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

The Migrant Laborer and Sharecropper

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• The migrant labor problem cannot be separated from the larger problem, which is rural insecurity. Both sharecropping and migrancy are indicative of this rural insecurity in America.

Increasingly, our rural society is dominated by powerful, highly organized, impersonal forces. Rural life is being depersonalized and secularized.

The small family-type farmer finds it more and more difficult to survive. Increasing numbers are being pushed off the land, or become sharecroppers and migrant laborers.

The spiritual, moral and physical consequences, the psychological maladjustments and resulting economic poverty, take a heavy toll in terms of human values.

Recommendations

Maintenance and expansion of programs of service to the migrant laborer and the sharecropper, such programs to be planned and carried out cooperatively at the local level, making use of all available community resources.

Legislation providing for long-term credit financing to help needy rural people to become home owners, administered without discrimination, and with representatives of the race or class involved serving on such administrative committees.

Leadership training and publications which make known the issues involved.

A home-management training program at the grass roots.

Decentralization of industry so that rural people may have more employment opportunities.

We do not believe that alien labor should be imported unless there is a clear and definite need after domestic labor has been employed, and when brought in all alien laborers should be adequately protected.

—ELLIS MARSHBURN, *Chairman*
DONALD L. WEST, *Secretary*

The Agricultural College and the Rural Pastors Institute

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• The Commission found two general types of major institutes carried on by the land-grant colleges for rural pastors:

a. The conference type of program carried on for ten days, a week, or less. Its purpose is in-service training and inspiration.

b. The school of three, six, or more weeks with an academic stature which allows the giving of credit toward advanced degrees.

The Commission feels that there is place for what might be termed "extension courses," which could be carried on at diverse centers throughout the state, meeting perhaps once each week on a semester basis, with or without limited college credit.

It is our opinion that the following subjects be presented so far as possible in college courses: rural sociology, rural social psychology, rural social problems of current concern, agricultural economics, population characteristics of the rural areas, community organization and disorganization, community agencies, community study and analysis, group leadership and its development, recreational leadership and resources, the rural home and family life, pastoral counseling, music and worship for rural people, the selection and use of audio-visual aids and opportunities for study in subjects related to the "productive homestead."

Recommendations

That the rural pastors in each state should request from their Agricultural Extension Service a brochure detailing the services which the county agricultural agents and the county home demonstration agents are in a position to offer to local rural churches and their pastors.

That the rural pastors from each state should request their state Agricultural Extension Service to establish a relationship between the county agricultural and home demonstration agents and the local church organizations.

That the person who shall be made responsible for Town and Country Work in the new National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. make a periodic search of the publications of the land-grant colleges which are pertinent to the rural church and the rural community, and distribute this list for local consumption.

—WILLIAM G. MATHER, *Chairman*
ALFRED C. BARTHOLOMEW, *Secretary*
R. ALVIN WILSON, *Secretary*

The Christian Teaching Mission

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• Out of our sessions the following recommendations emerged:

1. To commend the program of teaching missions to town and country communities because it is a program which is highly adaptable to the particular situations of each community and is the answer to a great need for the revitalization of our churches and the evangelizing of our communities.

2. That the family approach be especially emphasized in town and country communities with special considerations being given to the spiritual welfare of families; to social service enterprises; and to the new church school curriculum which uses the home as the teacher.

3. That town and country communities use the Christian Teaching Mission only when a sufficient number of churches are willing to go into the program completely and with thorough preparation.

4. We urge that census data be so compiled and presented as to be used as a key to community approach.

5. That a manual for leaders be made available, after full consultation with denominational town and country leaders.

6. That a place be given to the National Christian Teaching Mission on the "This Is How We Did It" section of the 1951 Convocation Program.

7. We urge the use of lay leadership in planning seminars, and especially in the census and program enlargement sections of the Mission.

8. That guest leaders be invited for each church of multiple fields, studied charges, or for vacant churches.

—HARRY KALAS, *Chairman*
WAYNE W. HOXSIE, *Secretary*

Church Cooperation in the Rural Community

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• This commission discussed in its first session the types of church cooperation and union being practiced today. Under this head we listed the union church, where two or more churches worship together; the larger parish—a pastoral charge that has been enlarged to meet the changed social and economic conditions of the same denomination, or multi-denominations functioning as a unit; the yoked field or parish (two churches of different denominations served by the same pastor without a central committee); pastoral unity; the circuit charge; the community church; and group ministry, which is not an organization but a type of work.

It was felt that it is always well to be fully aware of community needs before instituting plans for church unity. These needs can best be ascertained through pastoral calls. Cooperation in unity, it was felt, could be obtained through the circularization of literature, discussion groups, by coordinating top and bottom denominational executives and local people.

The extent to which churches can cooperate yet retain their separate identities in a larger parish project was discussed. The members of the commission felt that cooperation lends itself to competition, strengthening rather than destroying each individual church. Lack of church cooperation was felt to be, in many instances, the fault of ministers rather than that of lay leaders.

—RALPH L. WILLIAMSON, *Chairman*

The United Church Canvass

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

The commission topic was de-oted to the matter of financial nvassing of a community, with very Protestant church in that rea participating.

The United Church Canvass is xtremely simple in diagram and ay be obtained from the New ork office at 214 East 21st Street, ew York 10, N. Y. After the dia-ram is obtained, the minister who taking the initiative of setting p this program for his community hould quietly and prayfully con-der the proper minister to take he leadership in this program. hen a director of the general com-unity canvass should be chosen. his person must be a layman of nimpeachable moral character who well known and highly respected y the community.

Step number two is the appoint-ent of a canvass director for each ndividual cooperating church. Step hree is to get this group together o plan the details of carrying out he plan. This should be an unhur-ied, informal, dinner meeting. Aft-r the details of executing the pro-ram are decided upon, each church s asked to submit a copy of its local hurch budget. These individual udgets are totaled as the general hurch budget which is divided by ifty-two in order to show the week-y expense of administering the hurch program.

The educational program is then aunched and continued for one nonth. This is done by the laymen. The month's program must be well lanned and properly administered. The mediums to be used are the adio, theatres, press, buses, street ars, church bulletins, and a street anner. If there is a local radio roadcasting station, it will give spot dvertising. The press will be happy o publish any news.

The evening for sending out the olicitors comes at the end of the nonth when they gather at a cen-tral location, and are instructed to all in their reports at the close of each evening's work during the week of canvassing. Then on the following Sunday evening they meet at an auditorium large enough to accommodate the congregations of all the churches involved. This is called Victory Sunday. Each canvass director reports and then the gen-eral director gives a composite re-port. If any church has failed to reach its goal, the other churches pledge themselves to help in the follow-up work.

This plan has been found to be very effective, not only in the matter of raising a budget, but in the larg-er capacity of uniting Protestants in a community effort. Ten years ago the total budget of the cooper-ating Protestant churches in Coun-cil Bluffs, Iowa, was $87,000. This year those same churches have a $257,000 budget subscribed, through the United Church Canvass plan. Certainly this plan is worthy of our investigation if we are interested in doing something really constructive for our communities.

—C. Carson Bransby, *Chairman*
Darrel T. Taggart, *Secretary*

Ministers' Salaries

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• There are three types of parishes which must be considered as we deal with the problem of ministers' salaries:

1. The parish in which the eco-nomic level is low and must be sup-ported with mission funds.

2. The parish which could sup-port a minister if it had adequate leadership. This may be a short-time mission project.

3. The underdeveloped self-sup-porting church where there must be an adequately trained man with ability if the church is to carry out its mission in the local community.

Too often the rural church must accept inadequately trained minis-ters because of low salary. Short pas-torates and underdeveloped fields are also results of insufficient sup-port.

One of the major causes of inade-quate salaries is competition be-tween churches. Larger parishes, federated, or union churches and denominational exchange of terri-tory are possible solutions to the problem. The Lord's Acre Plan is an aid in stewardship training, and adds to the income of the church. The productive homestead may be the solution to the salary problem in some situations.

We recommend that all churches and ministers cooperate in the pen-sion plan of their denomination, and that all employees of the church share in either the church pension plan or the social security plan.

We recommend that there should be a rural comity committee in each state to study church situations to avoid waste of money and effort.

We further recommend that the Convocation Program for 1951 in-clude a presentation of how the problems of an overchurched com-munity have been met.

—Gene Wetherell, *Chairman*

The Rural Pastor as a Counselor of Individuals

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• Human nature is fundamentally the same everywhere. To deny the existence of problems is to show in-difference to human need. These problems may be classified as per-sonality, family, social, and religious. The pastor is the one of those best qualified to recognize them. The personal touch of his pastoral calls, his presence in time of need, his sincere love for the people, should create a confidence which will cause them to come to him for help.

There is no definite rule for coun-seling; each situation calls for its own approach.

As a counselor, the minister should keep himself well informed through reading, and close contacts with doc-tors, psychiatrists and other social workers.

Finally, the pastor can prepare the way by his preaching, teaching, and pastoral visits, motivated always by a heart aflame with love for hu-manity and a sincere desire to min-ister in the name of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

—Meredith J. Sprunger, *Chairman*
Harold E. Underwood, *Secretary*

1950 CONVOCATION REGISTRATION, COLUMBIA, MO.

Denomination	*No. Registered*
Baptist	58
Church of God	12
Congregational Christian Churches	37
Disciples	48
Episcopal	9
Evangelical and Reformed	71
Evangelical United Brethren	20
Methodist	111
Presbyterian (U.S.A. and U.S.)	109
United Presbyterian	20
Miscellaneous and Not Designated	13
TOTAL	508

"Country Church 'Goes to Town' "

• How an Illinois rural church congregation of fifty members raised $25,000 to build a new church building is told by Arthur West in a recent issue of *Zion's Herald,* Boston, Mass.

The members of Brick Methodist Church (near Marshall, Ill.) adopted the Lord's Acre plan as a means of raising the money. Every fall each family brought to a special service the proceeds from one acre of land —an offering which often totaled nearly $1,000. This money, together with individual and special group gifts, was laid away for the building fund. After ten years of sacrificial sharing and saving, the dream of these people was fulfilled.

The Rev. Harold J. Kemp, the Marshall circuit pastor, divides his time between six churches, "but the Brick Church pays twice as much as any other church and three times what some pay." Brick Church people "don't want to be on relief."

A little church can accomplish almost incredible things when it tries.

Worship in the Rural Church

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• Recognizing the fact that many of our churches are poorly constructed and not too attractive, it is still a fact that one can worship God anywhere if the proper attitude is maintained. The aim of true worship is God re-seen and man remade.

We rejoice in the fact that there is an upsurge of interest in improving the services of worship within Protestantism.

In considering preparation for public worship it is well to give thought to the avoidance of prayer that is sermonic, informative, irreverent, formal, remote, ornate and lengthy. These are the seven deadly sins that often creep into public prayer.

Professor Holt of Westminster Choir College presented the topic, "Music in the Rural Church." He indicated that the Westminster Choir College would be glad to help all churches with their music problems. He also noted that the Westminster series of choir music, recorded by the Choir and interpreted by Dr. Williamson, would be helpful in solving many choir problems in the rural church. According to Mr. Holt, music in the church should have a three-fold purpose: education, evangelism and worship.

It was noted that the Federal Council of Churches is sponsoring seminars on worship which are available to any local group, ministerial association or other interested organization.

—DEANE EDWARDS, *Chairman*

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member of the group knew all others and knew that the struggle for survival had to be a group undertaking. Moral imperatives (the mores) evolved to guarantee group survival and group integrity. The mores of the group dictated the conscience of individuals. Penalties were assessed against those whose individual consciences were not strong enough to uphold the group's moral code. The lesson of all history is that these moral imperatives arose and were maintained by an understanding of the relationship in which the individual and the group were involved and the acceptance of responsibility in all such relationships.

Today it is difficult to know all the relationships in which one is involved but we must know them if we would work and live intelligently within them. This requires a lot of high intelligence, that men be outstandingly rational. But it is not enough to be merely secularly intelligent, men must also have consciences about these complex human relations. They must be rationally conscientious men. They must know what to do and they must measure what they do by what they ought to do.

The Rural Church and Community Agencies

FROM THE COMMISSION REPORT

• We believe in the importance of the salvation of the individual, but we feel that our concept has enlarged. We therefore believe in the redemption of the total community.

This community redemption can be accomplished when the church works with existing community agencies. The church should be the shepherd of community agencies.

We must face the economic problems from the standpoint of the church.

The church must raise the standards of the community through adult education.

We must train lay leadership through the use of ex-schoolteachers, training schools and reading courses.

We must develop community-minded pastoral leadership through seminary programs of in-service training for pastors and internship for students.

In order to increase our services and have greater efficiency we must substitute cooperation for competition in our church programs, our church buildings, our lay leadership, and in our pastoral leadership.

—JAMES D. WYKER, *Chairman*